

Message Text

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ACTION EB-03

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-08 ARA-06 INR-05 /023 W

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R 231237Z OCT 75

FM AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9993

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EPAP, UY

SUBJECT: URUGUAYAN MEAT INSPECTION SERVICE

1. SUMMARY: A SERIOUS POTENTIAL BILATERAL PROBLEM RECENTLY AROSE AS A RESULT OF A VISIT HERE BY USDA/APHIS MEAT INSPECTION PERSONNEL. THE UNSATISFACTORY CONDITIONS THEY FOUND, THREATENING THE EXPORTS OF URUGUAY'S MAJOR PRODUCT, BEEF, LED TO PRESIDENT BORDABERRY REQUESTING U.S. ASSISTANCE. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT THE DEPARTMENT CONSULT URGENTLY WITH APHIS TO ARRANGE TO HAVE IT PROVIDE TO THE GOU INSPECTION SERVICE THE REMAINING PART OF THE SHORT-TERM ASSISTANCE

REQUEST. END SUMMARY.

2. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE JULIO AZNAREZ EXPRESSED TO OUR AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE HIS PERSONAL SATISFACTION, AS WELL AS THE GOU'S DEEP APPRECIATION FOR THE STAY LAST WEEK BY USDA/APHIS VETERINARIAN RAFAEL CORDERO. THE MINISTER WAS SO PLEASED WITH THE TRANSFORMATION HE SEES IN URUGUAY'S MEAT INSPECTION SERVICE THAT HE ASKED IF WE COULD ARRANGE FOR APHIS TO FOLLOW UP WITH A SHORT SEMINAR FOR MEAT INSPECTION PERSONNEL. HE WOULD LIKE THIS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM OF CHANGE. THE ATTACHE AND THE APHIS VETERINARIAN STRONGLY ENDORSED THE IDEA OF A SEMINAR, BUT INDICATED TIMING AND AVAILABILITY OF MANPOWER WOULD HAVE TO BE DETERMINED BY APHIS IN WASHINGTON.

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3. THE DELAYED DEPARTURE OF THE APHIS VETERINARIAN WAS REQUESTED BY THE AMBASSADOR FOLLOWING THE DELISTING BY THE GOU OF THREE OUT OF THE SIX PLANTS CERTIFIED AS MEETING U.S. SANITARY STANDARDS CONSEQUENTIAL TO AN INSPECTION BY FOUR APHIS VETERINARIANS OCTOBER 7-11. THIS DELISTING ON THE EVE OF A MAJOR SALE OF 25,000 TONS (REPRESENTING A ONE-THIRD INCREASE IN PROJECTED 1975 EXPORTS) TO BRAZIL FOR PROCESSING AND RE-EXPORT TO THE U.S. PROMPTED PRESIDENT BORDABERRY TO CALL IN THE AMBASSADOR TO EXPRESS HIS GRAVE CONCERN. THE AMBASSADOR OUTLINED THE U.S. INSPECTION RESULTS AND THE DIFFICULTIES CAUSED BY THE ABSENCE OF A RESIDENT U.S. INSPECTOR IN THE REGION SINCE MAY AND SAID WE FULLY APPRECIATED THE SERIOUS SITUATION. THE PRESIDENT RECOGNIZED THE PROBLEMS OF THE GOU INSPECTION SERVICE AND ASKED FOR OUR HELP IN REVAMPING IT. THE AMBASSADOR AGREED TO ASK ONE OF OUR VETERINARIANS TO REMAIN IN URUGUAY TO MAKE A FOLLOW-UP PLANT VISITS AND ADVISE THE LOCAL INSPECTION SERVICE.

4. THE AMBASSADOR STRONGLY URGES THAT APHIS CONDUCT THE REQUESTED MEAT INSPECTION SEMINAR IN URUGUAY AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. HE VIEWS THIS AS A LOGICAL EXTENSION OF THE COMMITMENT HE GAVE TO PRESIDENT BORDABERRY. AFTER MANY YEARS OF A WEAK AND INEFFECTIVE MEAT INSPECTION PROGRAM, IT APPEARS THAT URUGUAY NOW REALIZES THE NEED FOR REFORM AND IS WILLING TO MAKE THE NECESSARY COMMITMENTS TO THAT END. THE PRESIDENT AND THE MINISTER HAVE BOTH INVOLVED THEMSELVES PERSONALLY WITH THE CURRENT SITUATION, AND A STRONG, EFFECTIVE PROGRAM WOULD BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TO OUR TWO COUNTRIES.

5. THE PROPOSED SEMINAR WOULD BE DIVIDED INTO TWO OR THREE SESSIONS OF ONE WEEK EACH FOR SMALL GROUPS OF IN-PLANT INSPECTORS. IT WOULD INCLUDE PRACTICAL INSTRUCTION AND VISITS TO APPROVED FACILITIES. WE UNDERSTAND DR. CORDERO IS WILLING TO CONDUCT THE SEMINAR. EMBASSY, THEREFORE, RECOMMENDS SEMINAR BE SCHEDULED TO COINCIDE WITH HIS NEXT SCHEDULED VISIT TO SOUTH AMERICA IN LATE NOVEMBER. THE ONLY ADDITIONAL COST TO APHIS WOULD BE FOR THE ADDED PER DIEM.

6. THE AMBASSADOR REQUESTS THAT THE DEPARTMENT APPROACH APHIS WITH THIS REQUEST, EXPLAINING THE HIGH PRIORITY THAT HE GIVES IT. THE DEPARTMENT MAY DRAW UPON ANY PART OF THIS CABLE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH APHIS. DURING THESE DISCUSSIONS, ALSO REPEAT OUR WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT IN RESIDENCE A REGIONAL APHIS VETERINARIAN.

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7. GDS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOOD INSPECTION, TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, EXPORTS, MEATS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MONTEV03637
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750369-0320
From: MONTEVIDEO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751024/aaaaavqp.tel
Line Count: 109
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EB
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS, STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS; LIMDIS, STADIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 SEP 2003 by ElyME>; APPROVED <30 OCT 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: URUGUAYAN MEAT INSPECTION SERVICE
TAGS: EPAP, UY, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006